

Mad Cow Disease *(Continued from page 5)*

creates the same problems.

British mad cow disease (BSE) appeared in the mid-1980s. It quickly spread from just a few animals to infect hundreds of thousands.

By 1988, this disease was linked to feeding rendered animal by-products to livestock. British cattle were consuming the remains of sheep, cattle, and other animals deemed unfit for human consumption.

Despite the British outbreak, the dangerous practice of feeding rendered meat and bonemeal to livestock has been widely practiced in the U.S., where no meaningful restrictions were even attempted until August 1997.

Today, the U.S. still allows practices that should be banned, such as feeding pigs to pigs, pigs to cattle, and

SUMMARY OF HFA'S PETITION TO THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA)

In its first petition, HFA demands that:

- Blood and blood products from all mammals, including pigs and cows, must be prohibited for use in animal feed and pet foods.
- Gelatin and gelatin by-products must not be used in animal feed, as gelatin might carry infectious agents.
- Porcine materials must not be used in animal feed because U.S. pigs are known to have exhibited symptoms of central nervous system disease suspected as being TSE and have proven susceptible to TSE in laboratory tests.
- TSE-positive material absolutely must not be fed to any animals or be used in cosmetics, other products.

fertilizer or other

cattle blood products to calves. These practices are allowed despite suggestive evidence that TSE disease may already infect pigs, cattle, and squirrels and despite the existence of proven TSEs in sheep, deer, elk, and mink.

To date, 33 human beings have died from new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (nvCJD), apparently contracted from cattle infected with BSE. How many more will die is uncertain.

Due to the long incubation period, it will be many years before the extent of the disease and deaths are determined. Estimates now range from dozens to hundreds of thousands of eventual deaths from nvCJD in Britain.

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